

*Leading Congressman on Issue of Shoulder-Fired Missile Protections Applauds DHS Pilot Program for Commercial Jets*

Washington, DC—On Friday, U.S. Representative Steve Israel (D-NY), commended the actions of the Department of Homeland Security in creating a pilot program to install anti-missile technologies on commercial jets. The program will study how the anti-missile jammers work on aircraft as they travel from New York to California.

"Shoulder-fired missiles are a serious threat to our aviation system, our economy and the traveling public," said Congressman Israel. "We have the technology to protect our planes, but critics have posed questions about their suitability for commercial aircraft. The only way to see if the systems work on commercial aircraft is to try them on commercial aircraft. I'm glad we are taking the next step in protecting our planes from the dangers posed by these weapons."

"BAE Systems is pleased to be approved for testing the JETEYE (tm) Counter-MANPADS system during this important passenger aircraft evaluation phase of the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) program," said BAE Systems Electronics and Integrated Solutions President Mike Heffron. "We appreciate Congressman Israel's strong leadership on this issue and his continued support of DHS's Counter-MANPADS program. BAE Systems looks forward to working with DHS, the airlines, Congressman Israel, and other key policy-makers as we continue to develop this technology for commercial aircraft."

Skeptics of putting anti-missile technologies on commercial airplanes have pointed to the cost of maintenance, wear and tear and reduced gas mileage as impediments to using the equipment on non-military aircraft. This new program, follows another DHS program testing Northrop Grumman technology on Fed-Ex aircraft. The programs are not meant to test the effectiveness of the technologies against missiles, but are meant to provide information on how they cope with non-military use.

Developed more than thirty years ago to protect small groups of ground troops from air assaults, shoulder-fired missiles (also known as MANPADS, or "MAN Portable Air Defense Systems) have proved highly effective at targeting aircraft. The ability of terrorists to accurately target aircraft from as far as three miles away makes it very difficult to protect against the weapons. Reports from the CIA, the State Department, and other government agencies indicate

that shoulder-fired missiles have hit dozens of civilian aircraft since the 1970s and killed hundreds of people. They accounted for most of the planes brought down in the first Gulf War and are responsible for a number of shoot-downs in the current war in Iraq.

Rep. Israel has been the leading voice in Congress for protecting against the threat of shoulder-fired missiles and is the author of legislation that would retrofit American-flagged commercial jets with anti-missile countermeasures.